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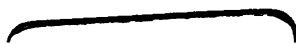
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BATTLE
OF
VALCOUR
ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN,
OCTOBER 11TH,
1776.

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ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN,

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BATTLE OF VALCOUR.

From the time when Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold marched, side by side, into the fortress at Ticonderoga, in May 1775, until the autumn of the next year, the Americans held undisputed control of Lake Champlain. Over its waters the brave and lamented MONTGOMERY led his army to the invasion of Canada; and over the same waters, in the summer of 1776, the broken fragments of that army, decimated by death and worn out by sickness and disease, returned, unmolested, to the ill-constructed and poorly supplied hospitals at Crown Point.

But we were not long to retain this supremacy. The possession of the lake was of vital importance to both parties. It was the Key to Canada from the South, and to New York from the North. The plan of the campaign of 1776, on the side of the English, contemplated a separate movement against Ticonderoga, and the city of New York, and the conjunction of the two armies on the banks of the Hudson at Albany. General and Lord Howe were sent, with a large military and naval force, against New York, and Sir Guy Carleton, with Burgoyne, Phillips, Fraser, Nesbit and Reidesel under him, was placed in command of thirteen thousand troops collected in Canada.

During the summer, the English were actively engaged in the construction and equipment of a fleet for service upon Lake Champlain. Seamen, ship carpen-

ters and laborers, in great numbers, were collected at St. Johns on the Richelieu. A ship of war, afterwards called the *Inflexible*, had been built in England and sent over to be used on Lake Champlain. This vessel, and two schooners, the *Maria* and *Carleton*, were taken to pieces, carried over the rapids, and reconstructed at St. Johns. Several smaller vessels and a great number of longboats and bateaux were dragged up the rapids. With such energy was the work pushed forward that in twenty-eight days after the keel was laid the ship was ready to receive her armament. Six hundred and ninety-seven seamen were drafted from the war ships lying at Quebec and sent forward to man the lake fleet.

While the English were thus engaged at one end of the lake, the Americans were as actively employed at the other end, in preparations to repel the threatened invasion. The construction and equipment of a fleet was confided to General Benedict Arnold, who prosecuted the work with such energy, that, on the 20th of August, he sailed from Crown Point with nine vessels, carrying fifty-five guns and seventy-eight swivels, and manned by three hundred and ninety-five men. With this force, increased on the 6th of September by two or three other vessels, he cruised about the lower end of the lake until the 23d of that month, when he cast anchor in the narrow channel between Valcour Island and the main shore. He was here joined by Brigadier General Waterbury, and the galleys *Trumbull*, *Washington* and *Congress*. The whole naval force of the Americans was now collected at Valcour Island, with the exception

of an eight-gun galley, then receiving her armament at Ticonderoga, and the schooner *Liberty*, which had been sent to Crown Point for supplies. The fleet consisted of the sloop *Enterprise*, mounting ten guns and ten swivels; the schooner *Royal Savage*, twelve guns and ten swivels; the schooner *Revenge*, eight guns and ten swivels; the Galley *Lee*, six guns and ten swivels; the galleys *Trumbull*, *Congress* and *Washington*, each eight guns and sixteen swivels; and the gondolas, *New Haven*, *Providence*, *Boston*, *Spitfire*, *Philadelphia*, *Connecticut*, *Jersey*, and *New York*, each mounting three guns and eight swivels:—fifteen vessels in all, carrying an aggregate of eighty-six guns and one hundred and fifty-two swivels. All of the vessels had been built at Skenesborough (Whitehall) except the sloop *Enterprise*, which had been captured by Arnold at St. Johns the year before. The men and sailors on board the fleet numbered less than eight hundred. Arnold had daily trained them to the guns. He, however, complained frequently of their want of discipline and inefficiency. On the 7th September he writes General Gates, “We have but very indifferent men in general. Great part of those who ship for seamen know very little of the matter.” Again on the 21st he writes, “The drafts from the regiments at Ticonderoga are a miserable set; indeed the men on board the fleet, in general, are not equal to half their number of good men;” and again he writes, “we have a wretched motley crew in the fleet; the marines the refuse of every regiment, and the seamen, few of them ever wet with salt water.” On the 1st of October he writes from Val-

cour island for 100 seamen and requests Gates to send "no land-lubbers." Arnold was also constantly calling for clothing and ammunition and as late as the 10th of October asks to have sent him a supply of shoes, watch-coats, blankets and hats or caps. At this time, he was ignorant of the position or intention of the enemy. "We cannot, at present," he writes, "determine how long it will be requisite to remain here. It may depend on the intelligence we may receive. We shall not return one minute sooner than is prudent or necessary. I have received no late intelligence from the northward. The loss of two small canoes (all we had) has prevented my sending out small parties." While he was writing this despatch, the British fleet, having passed out of the Richelieu, was sailing up the lake. This fleet comprised twenty-nine vessels, mounting eighty-nine guns: The *Inflexible* of eighteen guns; the schooner *Maria*, fourteen guns; the schooner *Carleton*, twelve guns; the radeau *Thunderer*, twelve guns and two howitzers; the gondola *Loyal Convert*, seven guns, and twenty gun boats and four long-boats with one gun each. These vessels were manned by six hundred and ninety-seven picked seamen. A number of soldiers, artillerists and Indians accompanied the expedition.

The following account of the Battle, between the two fleets, is taken from PALMER'S HISTORY OF LAKE CHAMPLAIN.

The route taken by vessels passing up the lake from Canada, lies along and nearly parallel to the west shore of Grand Isle. Opposite Cumberland Head the lake is

two miles wide, but, as soon as that point is passed, it increases in width to five miles, and does not again contract until you approach the mouth of the Bouquet. On the western side of the lake, about four miles south-west from Cumberland Head, and nearly two miles to the right of the track of vessels sailing directly up the lake, is the island of Valcour, which is separated from the main shore by a channel about one half mile in width. This channel is deep enough for the largest vessels, and is hid from the view of boats sailing up the lake, until they have passed some distance south of the Island. Midway of this channel, and where it is most contracted, Arnold anchored his vessels in a line extending from shore to shore. "We are moored," he writes to General Gates, "in a small bay on the west side of the Island, as near together as possible, and in such form that few vessels can attack us at the same time, and those will be exposed to the fire of the whole fleet."

At eight o'clock on Friday morning, October 11th, the English were discovered passing Cumberland Head with a strong north or north-west wind, and bearing in the direction of Crown Point, towards which it was supposed Arnold had retired. The fleet at this time was under the command of Capt. Thomas Pringle, of the *Lord Howe*, who made the schooner *Maria* his flag ship. General Carleton was also on board the *Maria*, but took no command of the fleet. As the English appeared in sight, off Cumberland Head, General Waterbury went on board the *Congress* galley, and urged that they should immediately set sail and fight the enemy on the

retreat in the broad lake; but Arnold declined, at that late hour, to change his plan of defence.

Capt. Pringle was some distance ahead of Valcour when he first discovered the American vessels. He immediately changed his course towards the Island, with a view to engage, but found great difficulty in bringing any of his vessels into action. About eleven o'clock, however, the gun-boats were enabled to sweep to windward and take a position to the south of the American fleet, when they opened a fire upon the *Royal Savage* which, with the galleys, had advanced a short distance in front of the line. The British schooner *Carleton* soon after came to the assistance of the gun-boats. The *Royal Savage* sustained the fire of the British vessels for some time, during which her mast was crippled and much of her rigging shot away. She then attempted to return to the line, but, running too far to the leeward, grounded near the south-west point of the Island, and was abandoned by her men, who succeeded in reaching the other boats in safety. At night the British boarded the schooner, and set fire to her.

At half past twelve o'clock the *Carleton* and the gun-boats had approached within musket shot of the American line, when the action became general, and continued without cessation until about five in the afternoon. During the engagement Arnold was on board the *Congress*, Waterbury on the *Washington* and Colonel Wigglesworth on the *Trumbull*. The *Congress* and *Washington* suffered severely. The latter was hulled in several places, her main-mast shot through, and her sails

torn to pieces. Waterbury fought bravely on the quarter deck of his vessel, and towards the close of the action was the only active officer on board; the Captain and Master being severely wounded, and the First Lieutenant killed. The gondola *New York* lost all her officers except Captain Lee, and the gondola *Philadelphia*, Captain Grant, was so badly injured that she sank about one hour after the engagement. Arnold fought the *Congress* like a lion at bay, pointing almost every gun with his own hands, and cheering his men with voice and gesture. His vessel was hulled twelve times and received seven shot between wind and water; the main-mast was injured in two places, the rigging cut to pieces, and many of the men were killed and wounded.

On the side of the English, the battle was sustained by the gun-boats and the schooner *Carleton*, and by a party of Indians who were landed on the island, and kept up an incessant fire of musketry during the engagement. The English vessels suffered considerably. On board the *Carleton* eight men were killed and six wounded. Two of the gun-boats were sunk, and one was blown up, with a number of men on board. About five o'clock in the afternoon, Captain Pringle, who had made several unsuccessful attempts to bring his larger vessels into action, called off those engaged, and anchored his whole fleet just out of reach of the American guns. The *Thunderer* lay at the right of the line, a little south of Garden Island, the schooner *Maria* on the left near the main shore, while the *Loyal Convert* and the *Inflexible* occupied intermediate positions. The *Carleton* and

gun-boats were anchored near and among the other vessels. By this arrangement, Captain Pringle hoped to prevent the escape of the American fleet during the night.

Arnold was well satisfied that he could not successfully resist the superior force, with which the English were prepared to attack him on the following morning. His men had fought with the most daring bravery and resolution, but he had only succeeded in retaining his position by the direction of the wind, which had prevented the larger vessels of the British fleet from joining in the action. Even under equally favorable circumstances, he could not resist a renewed attack, for his boats were already badly crippled, sixty of his men, including several officers, killed or wounded, and nearly three-fourths of each vessel's ammunition spent. A Council of War was immediately called, when it was determined that the fleet should retire during the night towards Crown Point.

At seven o'clock in the evening Colonel Wigglesworth got the *Trumbull* under way, and, bearing around the north end of Valcour, directed his course towards the upper end of the lake, passing outside of the British line. The *Trumbull* was soon followed by the *Enterprise* and *Lee*, with the gondolas; and about ten o'clock, Waterbury started in the *Washington* galley, followed closely by Arnold, in the *Congress*. In this order, with a light at the stern of each vessel, the fleet passed to Schuyler Island, about nine miles distant, where they arrived early the next morning. On exami-

nation Arnold found two of the gondolas too badly injured to repair. These he sank near the Island, and, having fitted up the other vessels as well as his limited time and means would permit, again set sail for Crown Point.

While Arnold was repairing his vessels, the British fleet weighed anchor and commenced beating up the lake in pursuit; the wind blowing gently from the south. Early on the morning of the 13th, the American fleet was off the Bouquet, and the English lay a little above Schuyler Island. Arnold now had the wind in the south, while a fresh north-east wind, blowing in the broader part of the lake, favored the English commander, who brought up his leading vessels soon after the former had passed Split Rock.—On this occasion Captain Pringle led in person in the *Maria*, closely followed by the *Inflexible* and *Carleton*. The *Maria* and *Inflexible* at first attacked the *Washington* galley, which was too much shattered to keep up with the rest. The galley struck after receiving a few shots. The two vessels then joined the *Carleton*, and, for several hours, poured an incessant fire into the *Congress* galley, which was briskly returned. Arnold kept up a running fight until he arrived within ten miles of Crown Point, when he ran the *Congress* and four gondolas into a small bay in Pantou, on the east side of the lake, and, having removed the small arms, burned the vessels to the water's edge. In this action the *Congress* lost her first lieutenant and three men.

As soon as the boats were consumed, Arnold led

his party through the woods to Crown Point, where he arrived at four o'clock the next morning. The sloop *Enterprise*, the schooner *Revenge* and the galley *Trumbull*, with one gondola, had reached that place the day before, in safety. The galley *Lee*, Captain Davis, was run into a bay on the east side of the lake above Split Rock, where she was blown up. The only vessels taken by the enemy were the *Washington* galley and the gondola *Jersey*. The loss of the Americans in both engagements was between eighty and ninety, including the wounded. The English stated their loss in killed and wounded at forty, but, according to the American accounts, it must have exceeded one hundred.

The Battle of Valcour has not occupied the place, in the history of the revolution, which it deserves. Arnold, it is true, was defeated, but he escaped when almost every other Commander would have surrendered. His gallantry and the courage of his officers and men inspired universal confidence among the American troops at that gloomy and important crisis of the war. His men were raw and undisciplined, but good fighters, and followed where he "dared to lead," while his fame rose higher in the estimation of his compatriots than ever before. "It has pleased Providence to preserve General Arnold," Gates writes to Schuyler on the 15th of September. "Among the frowns of Providence we have the blessing of General Arnold's safe return," are the words of Richard Varick. Washington, always cautious in forming and expressing his opinions, declared there was not "a more active, more spirited and

more sensible Officer in the service." His gallant conduct at Quebec and Valcour had not then been tarnished by his treason at West Point.

The narrow strait between Valcour and the main land is historic. Over its waters have floated the white banner of France, the red cross of England, and the stars of our own Country. Deeply imbedded in its sands are the hulls of five vessels, over whose blood-stained decks the waves have rolled for a century. The position of but one of these wrecks, the schooner *Royal Savage*, is known. It lies about twenty feet from the shore, near the south-west point of the island, and the gunwales can yet be seen in low water. In 1868 portions of the sides were wrenched off with grappling irons and, since then, several relics have been raised from the wreck.

OFFICIAL REPORTS.¹

GENERAL ARNOLD TO GENERAL GATES.

SCHUYLER'S ISLAND, October 12, 1776.

DEAR GENERAL :—Yesterday morning, at eight o'clock,* the enemy's fleet, consisting of one ship mounting sixteen guns, one snow mounting the same number, one schooner of fourteen guns, two of twelve, two sloops, a bomb-ketch and a large vessel (that did not come up) with fifteen or twenty flat bottomed boats or gondolas, carrying one twelve or eighteen, pounder in their bows, appeared off Cumberland Head. We immediately prepared to receive them. The galleys and *Royal Savage* were ordered under way; the rest of our fleet lay at an anchor. At eleven o'clock they ran under the lee of Valcour and began the attack. The schooner, by some bad management, fell to leeward and was first attacked; one of her masts was wounded and her rigging shot away. The captain thought prudent to run her on the point of Valcour, where all the men were saved. They boarded her, and at night set fire to her. At half past twelve the engagement became general, and very warm. Some of the enemies ships and all their gondolas beat and rowed up within musket shot of us. They continued a very hot fire with round and grape shot until five o'clock, when they thought proper to retire to about six or seven hundred yards distance, and continued the fire till dark.

* American Archives, Fifth series, vol. ii., 1038. In the same letter, published in the journal of The New York Provincial Congress, vol. ii., p. 344, the time is stated at "10 o'clock."

The *Congress* and *Washington* have suffered greatly, the latter lost her First Lieutenant killed, Captain and Master wounded. The *New York* lost all her officers except the captain. The *Philadelphia* was hulled in so many places, that she sunk about one hour after the engagement was over. The whole killed and wounded amounted to about sixty. The enemy landed a large number of Indians on the Island and each shore, who kept an incessant fire on us but did little damage. The enemy had, to appearance, upwards of one thousand men in bateaux prepared for boarding. We suffered much for want of seamen and gunners. I was obliged, myself to point most of the guns on board the *Congress*, which I believe did good execution. The *Congress* received seven shot between wind and water ; was hulled a dozen times : had her main mast wounded in two places and her yard in one. The *Washington* was hulled a number of times ; her main-mast shot through and must have a new one. Both vessels are very leaky, and want repairing.

On consulting with General Waterbury and Colonel Wigglesworth, it was thought prudent to return to Crown Point, every vessel's ammunition being nearly three-fourths spent, and the enemy greatly superior to us in ships and men. At seven o'clock Colonel Wigglesworth, in the *Trumbull*, got under way ; the gondolas and small vessels followed, and the *Congress* and *Washington* brought up the rear. The enemy did not molest us. Most of the fleet is this minute come to an anchor. The wind is small to the southward. The enemy's fleet is under way to leeward, and beating up. As soon as our leaks are stopped, the whole fleet will make the utmost despatch to Crown Point, where I beg you will send ammunition, and your further orders for us. On the whole I think we have had a very fortunate escape, and have great reason to return our humble and

hearty thanks to Almighty God for preserving and delivering so many of us from our more than savage enemies.

I am, dear General, your affectionate servant,

B. ARNOLD.

P. S.—I had not moved on board the *Congress* when the enemy appeared, and lost all my papers and most of my clothes on board the schooner. I wish a dozen batteaux, well manned, could be sent immediately to tow up the vessels in case of a southerly wind.

I cannot, in justice to the officers in the fleet, omit mentioning their spirited conduct during the action.

B. A.

GENERAL ARNOLD TO GENERAL SCHUYLER.

TICONDEROGA, October 15, 1776.

DEAR GENERAL :—I make no doubt before this you have received a copy of my letter to General Gates of the 12th instant, dated at Schuyler's Island, advising of an action between our fleet and the enemy the preceding day, in which we lost a schooner and a gondola. We remained no longer at Schuyler's Island than to stop our leaks, and mend the sails of the *Washington*. At two o'clock P. M., the 12th, weighed anchor with a fresh breeze to the southward. The enemy's fleet at the same time got under way ; our gondola made very little way ahead. In the evening the wind moderated, and we made such progress that at six o'clock next morning we were about off Willsborough, twenty-eight miles from Crown Point. The enemy's fleet were very little way above Schuyler's Island ; the wind breezed up to the southward, so that we gained very little by beating or rowing, at the same time the enemy took a fresh breeze from the northeast, and by the time we had reached Split-Rock, were alongside of us. The *Washington* and *Congress* were in the rear, the rest of our fleet were ahead



except two gondolas sunk at Schuyler's Island. The *Washington* galley was in such a shattered condition, and had so many men killed and wounded, she struck to the enemy after receiving a few broadsides. We were then attacked in the *Congress* galley by a ship mounting twelve eighteen-pounders, a schooner of fourteen sixes, and one of twelve sixes, two under our stern, and one on our broadside, within musket-shot. They kept up an incessant fire on us for about five glasses, with round and grape-shot, which we returned as briskly. The sails, rigging, and hull of the *Congress* were shattered and torn in pieces, the First Lieutenant and three men killed, when, to prevent her falling into the enemy's hands, who had seven sail around me, I ran her ashore in a small creek ten miles from Crown-Point, on the east side, when, after saving our small-arms, I set her on fire with four gondolas, with whose crews, I reached Crown-Point through the woods that evening, and very luckily escaped the savages, who waylaid the road in two hours after we passed. At four o'clock yesterday morning I reached this place, exceedingly fatigued and unwell, having been without sleep or refreshment for near three days.

Of our whole fleet we have saved only two galleys, two small schooners, one gondola, and one sloop. General Waterbury, with one hundred and ten prisoners, were returned by Carleton last night. On board of the *Congress* we had twenty-odd men killed and wounded. Our whole loss amounts to eighty odd.

* * * * *

I am, dear General, your most affectionate, humble servant,
B. ARNOLD.

To Hon. Major General Schuyler.

N. B.—Two of the enemy's gondolas sunk by our fleet the first day, and one blown up with sixty men.

GENERAL WATERBURY TO THE PRESIDENT OF
CONGRESS.

STANFORD, October 24, 1776.

HONORED SIR :—I have now returned home on parole. Your Honor has undoubtedly heard of my misfortune of being taken prisoner on the 13th instant, on Lake Champlain. I shall give your Honor a short sketch of our engagement, which is as follows :

On Friday morning, the 11th instant, our alarm guns were fired, that the enemy's fleet were off Cumberland Head. I immediately went on board of General Arnold, and told him that I gave it as my opinion that the fleet ought immediately to come to sail, and fight them on the retreat in Main lake, as they were so much superior to us in number and strength, and we being in such a disadvantageous harbor to fight a number so much superior, and the enemy being able with their small boats to surround us on every side, as I knew they could, we lying between an island and the main ; but General Arnold was of the opinion that it was best to draw the fleet in a line where we lay, in the bay of Valcour. The fleet very soon came up with us, and surrounded us, when a very hot engagement ensued, from ten o'clock in the morning till towards sunset, when the enemy withdrew. We immediately held council to secure a retreat through their fleet to get to Crown Point, which was done with so much secrecy that we went through them entirely



undiscovered.¹ The enemy finding, next morning, that we had retreated, immediately pursued us,—the wind being against us, and my vessel so torn to pieces that it was almost impossible to keep her above water; my sails were so short that carrying sail split them from foot to head, and I was obliged to come to anchor at twelve o'clock, to mend my sails. When we had completed that we made sail just at evening. The enemy still pursued all night. I found next morning that they gained upon us very fast, and that they would very soon overtake me. The rest of the fleet all being very much ahead of me, I sent my boat on board of General Arnold to get liberty to put my wounded in the boat and send them forward and run my vessel on shore and blow her up. I received for answer, by no means to run her ashore, but to push forward to Split Rock, where he would draw the fleet in line and engage them again; but when I came to Split Rock, the whole fleet was making their escape as fast as they could, and left me in the rear to fall into the enemy's hands. But before I struck to them, the ship of eighteen twelve pounders and a schooner of fourteen six-pounders had surrounded me which obliged me to strike, and I thought it prudent to surrender myself prisoner of war. As soon as I was taken General Arnold, with four gondolas, ran ashore and blew up the vessels ahead of me. One thing I have omitted in the former part of my letter, that is, the *Royal Savage* ran ashore on the Point of Valcour in the first engagement and was lost.

* * * * *

DAVID WATERBURY, Jr.

¹ These hastily written expressions have led several writers astray. Arnold was not "surrounded," for no vessel of the English fleet was north of Valcour, and it was impossible, at the early hour when the retreat commenced, to have passed "through them" undiscovered. The Galley *Trumbull*, Col. Wigglesworth, got under way at seven o'clock in the

CAPTAIN THOMAS PRINGLE TO MR. STEPHENS,
SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY.

On board the *Maria*, off Crown-Point, October 15, 1776.

It is with the greatest pleasure that I embrace this opportunity of congratulating their Lordships upon the victory completed the 13th of this month, by His Majesty's fleet under my command, upon Lake Champlain.

Upon the 11th I came up with the Rebel fleet, commanded by Benedict Arnold; they were at anchor under the Island Valcour, and formed a strong line, extending from the island to the west side of the continent. The wind was so unfavorable that, for a considerable time, nothing could be brought into action with them but the gun-boats. The *Carleton* schooner commanded by Mr. Dacres, who brings their Lordships this, by much perseverance, at last got to their assistance; but, as none of the other vessels of the fleet could then get up, I did not think it by any means advisable to continue so partial and unequal a combat; consequently, with the approbation of his Excellency General Carleton, who did me the honor of being on board the *Maria*, I called off the *Carleton* and gun-boats, and brought the whole fleet to anchor in a line as near as possible to the Rebels, that their retreat might evening, and led the retreat followed by the other vessels, (see Arnold's letter of 12th) not passing "through" the British fleet, but around Valcour to the east of the British line.



be cut off ; which purpose was, however, frustrated by the extreme obscurity of the night, and in the morning the Rebels had got a considerable distance from us up the lake.

Upon the 13th, I again saw eleven sail of their fleet making off to Crown-Point, who, after a chase of seven hours, I came up with in the *Maria*, having the *Carleton* and *Inflexible* a small distance astern ; the rest of the fleet almost out of sight. The action began at twelve o'clock, and lasted two hours, at which time Arnold, in the *Congress* galley, and five gondolas ran on shore, and were directly abandoned and blown up by the enemy, a circumstance they were greatly favored in by the wind being off shore, and the narrowness of the lake. The *Washington* galley struck during the action, and the rest made their escape to Ticonderoga.

The killed and wounded in His Majesty's fleet, including the artillery in the gun-boats, do not amount to forty ; but, from every information I have yet got, the loss of the enemy must indeed be very considerable.

CAPTAIN DOUGLASS, OF THE ISIS, TO MR. STEPHENS.

QUEBEC, October 21, 1776.

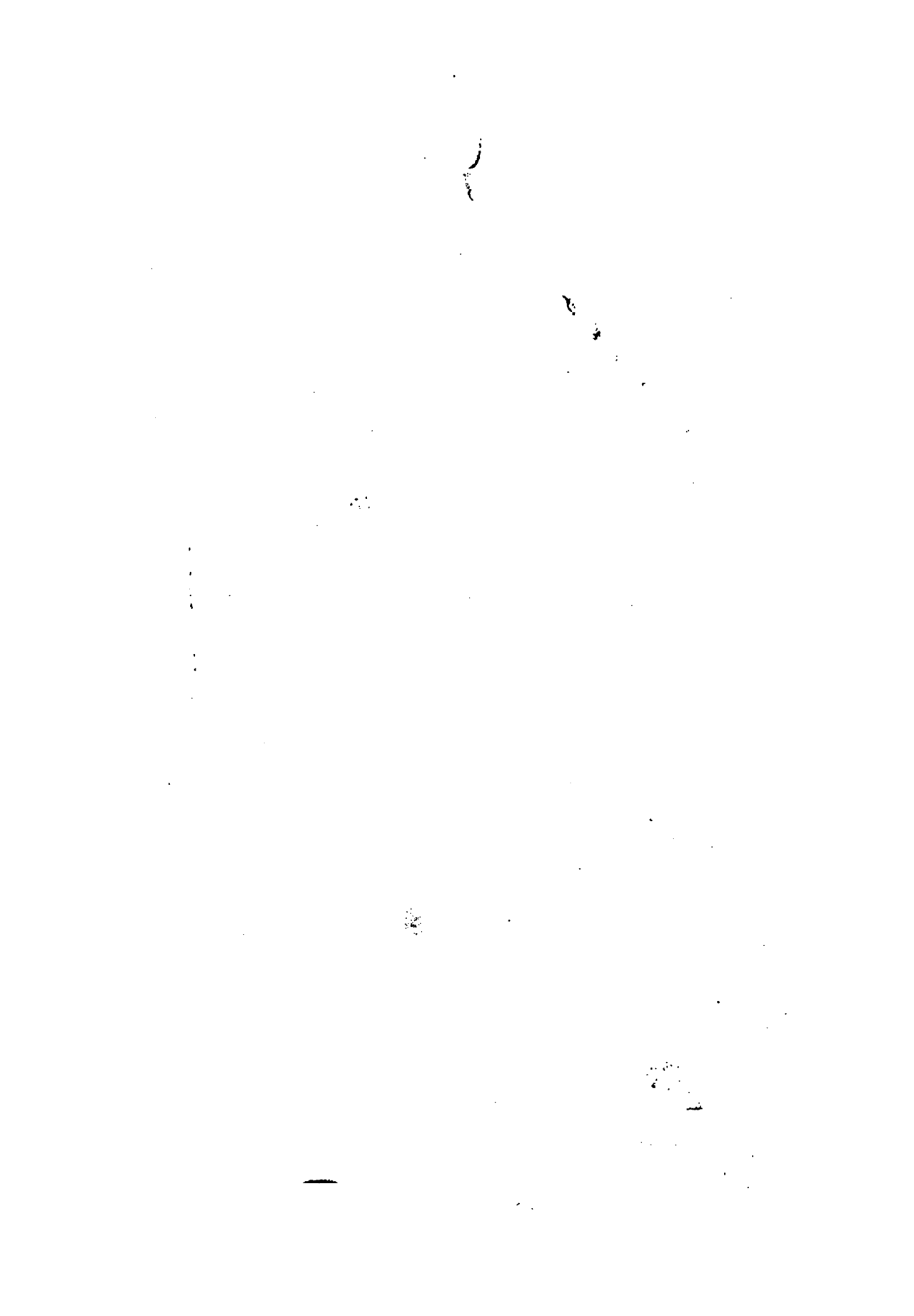
Having for the space of six weeks attended the naval equipments for the important expedition on Lake Champlain, I, on the 4th inst, saw with unspeakable joy the reconstructed ship now called the *Inflexible*, and commanded by Lieutenant Schank, her rebuilders, sail from St. Johns, twenty-eight days after her keel was laid, towards the place of rendezvous, taking in her eighteen twelve-pounders beyond the shoal, which is this side of Isle-aux-noix, in her way up.

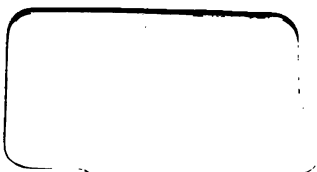
The prodigies of labor which have been effected since the Rebels were driven out of Canada, in creating, recreating and equipping a fleet of above thirty fighting vessels of different sorts and sizes, and all carrying cannon, since the beginning of July, together with the transporting over land, and afterwards dragging up the two rapids of St. Terese and St. Johns, thirty long-boats, the flat-bottomed boats, a gondola weighing about thirty ton and above four hundred batteax, almost exceed belief. His Excellency the Commander-in-chief of the army and all the other generals are of the opinion that the sailors of His Majesty's ships and transports, have, far beyond the usual limits of their duty, exerted themselves to the utmost on this great and toilsome occasion ; nor has a man of that profession uttered a single word expressive of discontent, amidst all the

hardships they have undergone, so truly patriotic are the motives by which they are actuated. To crown the whole, above two hundred prime seamen of the transports, impelled by a due sense of their country's wrongs, did most generously engage themselves to serve in our armed vessels during the expedition, and embarked accordingly. Such having then been our unremitting toils, I am happy beyond expression in hereby acquainting my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the destruction of almost the whole of the Rebel fleet, in two successive battles on the 11th and 13th instant, is our reward. I have received a letter from Captain PRINGLE, of the *Lord Howe*, armed ship, who commands the officers and seamen on the lake, and who bestows the highest encomiums on their behavior in both engagements. The Rebels did by no means believe it possible for us to get upon Lake Champlain this year; were much surprised at the first sight of the van of our force, but ran into immediate and utter confusion the moment a three-masted ship made her appearance, being a phenomenon they never so much as dreamed of.¹ Thus have His Majesty's faithful subjects here, contrary to a crude but prevailing idea, by straining every nerve in their country's cause, outdone them in working, as much as in fighting. The ship *Inflexible*, with the *Maria* and *Carleton* schooners, all reconstructions, did the whole of the second day's business, the flat-bottomed rideau, called the *Thunderer*, and the gondola, called the *Royal Con-*

¹ Arnold does not seem to have been badly frightened at the appearance of the "three-masted ship," although he had no knowledge that so large a vessel was upon the lake, until she hove in sight off Cumberland Head. WASHINGTON had heard of the vessel from a prisoner, and had transmitted the information to Congress on the 27th of September, but not even a rumor of such a vessel had reached the officers on Lake Champlain. Capt. Douglass was misinformed as to the relative efficiency of the two fleets. The British had a decided superiority both in the experience and discipline of seamen and gunners, and in weight of metal.

vert, with the gun-boats, not having been able to keep up with them. The said gondola was taken from the Rebels the day the siege of Quebec was raised. The loss we have sustained, considering the great superiority of the insurgents, is very small, consisting of between thirty and forty men killed and wounded, seamen, soldiers, artillery-men and all ; eight whereof were killed outright and six wounded on board the *Carleton*.





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